

February 2020 School Leader Update



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- A 'balcony' perspective while in the moment
- Input sought on draft plan to meet federal career and technical education law
- Change in the required Home Language Survey for all districts
- Iowa Learning Online to end service
- Iowa Bookshare update
- First National Work-Based Learning Conference in Iowa
- FY 2019 STOP School Violence Grant Program
- Iowa launches Iowa Governor's School Safety Bureau
- Resources for successful mathematics curriculum adoption and implementation
- Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program teacher licensure requirements
- National School Breakfast Week: March 2-6
- Become a summer meals champion

A 'balcony' perspective while in the moment

I've been thinking a lot about the power of perspective.

This might seem natural as I prepare to transition to a new role as dean of Drake University's School of Education this spring. However, I also thought about it in the context of teaching and leadership during the recent Emerging Educators Academy, where I was invited to speak. Perspective was this year's theme.

I recalled what Ron Heifitz and Marty Linsky stated in their book, *Leadership on the Line*: "Few practical ideas are more obvious or more critical than the need to get perspective in the midst of action... Great athletes can at once play the game and observe it as a whole."

This approach is also true of great teachers. They can toggle between being wholly absorbed at one moment in teaching students and in an instant take, as Heifitz and Linsky call it, a "balcony perspective" of the action in the classroom. I've seen this alternating perspective approach countless times in my school visits across Iowa.



Director Ryan Wise

[Read more](#)

Input sought on draft plan to meet federal career and technical education law

The Iowa Department of Education is holding three [public input meetings](#) on Thursday, Feb. 6 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs and Johnston to gather feedback on the draft of Iowa's state plan for meeting requirements of the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

Commonly referred to as Perkins V, the federal law reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, which provides support for career and technical education (CTE) programs in all 50 states and U.S. territories. CTE programs increase student engagement through the integration of technical and academic skills in hands-on, real-world learning experiences.

Those unable to attend a public meeting in person can view the [Heartland AEA meeting location via ZOOM](#). Iowans can also submit questions and feedback by completing online surveys about the [draft plan](#) and [performance targets](#).

[Top of page](#)

Strengthening
Career and Technical Education
for the 21st Century Act



Change in the required Home Language Survey for all districts

All school districts are responsible for administering the Home Language Survey (HLS) at the time of student enrollment. Iowa is changing its HLS and has adopted the three basic questions that have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

The three questions include:

1. What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?
2. What is the language most often spoken by the student?
3. What is the language that the student first acquired?



This change is effective Aug. 1. For questions, contact Pam McDonnell at (515) 380-5115 or pam.mcdonnell@iowa.gov.

[Top of page](#)

Iowa Learning Online to end service

Iowa Learning Online (ILO), the Iowa Department of Education's initiative to expand high-quality online learning opportunities, will be **available through the spring semester 2019-20 school year**. After that, districts will either need to create their own online

classes or work with a third-party vendor. ILO will no longer directly provide courses after the 2019-20 school year because there is no long-term, sustainable funding source available for operating the program.

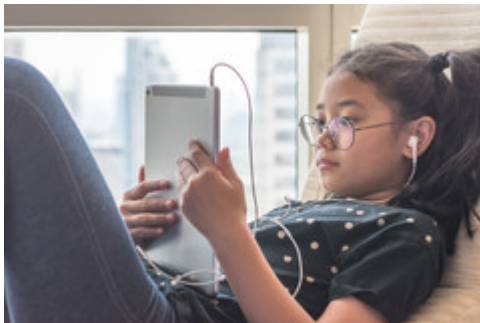


ILO staff will be happy to work with your district regarding options for your transition to the use of Department of Education-approved private providers of online courses or your own district-developed online courses. Thank you for allowing ILO to serve the school districts and students of Iowa.

For questions or concerns, contact ILO Director, Gwen Wallace Nagel at 515-419-3275 or gwen.nagel@iowa.gov.

[Top of page](#)

Iowa Bookshare update



Congratulations Iowa [Bookshare](#) members! Last spring, districts were urged to update organizational memberships and add student members in this ebook library for students with reading barriers.

In 2019, over 2000 struggling readers were added as [Bookshare](#) members, a 0.4 percent increase in Iowa. Iowa's 2.8 percent edges the state closer to the 5 percent of potential users represented by nationwide statistics.

Bookshare provides flexibility. E-books can be read on almost any device including smartphones, tablets, Chromebooks, and computers. The [reading experience](#) can be customized for audio, audio plus highlighted text, braille and other formats. Over

784,000 titles are available in textbooks, fiction for young adults, and other content to address Bookshare's global users.

Bookshare organizational memberships are **free** for every school district in Iowa. [Qualified student members](#) may also have a free individual membership.

Let's keep going and get Iowa struggling readers what they need. Break down those reading barriers with Bookshare.

[Top of page](#)

First National Work-Based Learning Conference in Iowa

For the first time, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) will be joining with Iowa Work Based Learning Coordinators to provide a National Work Based Learning Conference in Ankeny, Iowa. The conference will be held on April 22 and 23, at the FFA Enrichment Center on the Des Moines Area Community College campus.

The cost for the two-day conference is \$250. The conference will focus on national work-based learning trends and the continued professional development for work-based learning coordinators. The conference sessions will provide professional development in order to build high-quality student experiences and programs. There will be professional development and information geared toward instructors, counselors, and administrators.

To register, gain a preview into the sessions and other conference information, check ACTE's webpage dedicated to the [National Work Based Learning Conference](#).



[Top of page](#)

FY 2019 STOP School Violence Grant Program



The U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) currently has new funding opportunities listed and open for application on their website. As these opportunities are related to school safety, schools are encouraged to visit [BJA's Funding and Awards Page](#) for further information.

The FY 2019 STOP School Violence Grant Program is available to school districts and individual schools. The program aims to improve school security by providing students and teachers with necessary tools to recognize, respond quickly to, and help prevent acts of violence. Grant applications are due March 3.

[Learn more about BJA programs and funding.](#) For questions or additional information contact Rob Olsen at (515) 281-4743 or rob.olsen@iowa.gov.

[Top of page](#)

Iowa launches Iowa Governor's School Safety Bureau

Governor Kim Reynolds, the Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Department of Education announced the formation of the Iowa Governor's School Safety Bureau. This Bureau will focus solely on providing the needed resources and expertise to assist Iowa's 327 school districts and law enforcement partners to keep students, faculty and staff safe.

Public safety officials have seen an interest and need from first responders and schools to provide consistent training for rapid response to school intruders, exposure to weapons, bullying, and other threats. The Bureau will include a full-time core set of instructors dedicated to providing school safety training throughout the state upon request for nearly 500,000 students, more than 35,000 faculty and staff members, and countless first responders.

Iowa is taking steps to provide the necessary training and assistance to assist every school, regardless of its size, to provide safe learning environments. [Read more.](#)

[Top of page](#)



Resources for successful mathematics curriculum adoption and implementation

At EdReports, we're passionate about working with and learning from districts [to capture best practices for making curriculum adoption decisions](#). We work with districts large and small, urban and rural, all with dedicated individuals striving to ensure students thrive.

1. Getting Started: [Knowing Your Starting Point Data Inventory](#).
2. Alignment First: [Learn from the best practices of other districts like Newport-Mesa Unified School District](#)
3. Making the Most of Your Materials: [Math](#)



For questions, contact April Pforts at (515)314-6243 or april.pforts@iowa.gov. For additional information, visit the [Q&A mathematics blog](#)

[Top of page](#)

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program teacher licensure requirements



As preparations are made for the 2020-21 school year, keep in mind the qualifications required of Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) teachers. Per Iowa Administrative Code 16.9(5), districts must have an appropriately licensed and endorsed teacher in each classroom by Oct. 1 to receive SWVPP funds.

Teachers in SWVPP classrooms must hold a valid and current Iowa license issued by the Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) under Iowa Code chapter 272 and hold an endorsement that includes prekindergarten. A teacher who has only the PK-K Early Childhood Special Education endorsement is not appropriately licensed to teach in a SWVPP classroom because the endorsement does not include preschool general education.

Contact the [BOEE](#) for information on appropriate teaching endorsements or to apply for a Class B conditional license in one of the acceptable teaching endorsement areas. Submit applications for teacher licenses and/or endorsements to the BOEE early to ensure timely processing.

For more information on the SWVPP, visit the [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program web page](#) or contact Jennifer Adkins at 515-954-5652 or jennifer.adkins@iowa.gov, or Mary Breyfogle at 515-326-1030 or mary.breyfogle@iowa.gov.

[Top of page](#)

National School Breakfast Week: March 2-6

National School Breakfast Weeks is a celebration of the National School Breakfast Program, permanently established in 1975 by an act of Congress. The theme this year is “Out of this World!” and schools can celebrate with special menu items, events, and student activities. This week is a great opportunity to bring positive attention to the school breakfast program and the impact it has on your school community.

In Iowa 19 percent of students participate in the School Breakfast Program compared to 64 percent in school lunch. Iowa ranks 49th in the country for the number of free and reduced-price students participating in school breakfast compared to school lunch. [Research](#) shows eating breakfast helps improve student academic performance and behavior.



School administrators are encouraged to show support for this critical program and help spread awareness of the availability of school breakfast each day. One way to get involved with the celebration is to be a celebrity guest server.

For more information on the [School Breakfast Program](#), contact Carrie Scheidel at (515) 281-4758 or carrie.scheidel@iowa.gov.

Pictured at top right: Celebrity guest server, Superintendent Brad Buck, along with Food Service Director, Jeannie Allgood. Photo courtesy of Waukee Community School District.

[Top of page](#)

Become a summer meals champion

Childhood food insecurity remains at unacceptable levels and children are at risk during the summer, when they lose access to school meals. Your leadership can help ensure that the students you work with during the year do not go hungry in the summer.

The Summer Food Service Program provides organizations with the opportunity to serve free meals to children 18 and under, in high need areas.

What can you do to help make summer meals a priority?



- Connect with other school districts that have experience with this program.
- Sponsor the program and host a meal site.
- Partner with local organizations to provide meals at child-serving activities in the community - library summer reading and parks and rec programs.
- Become a vendor for other program sponsors.
- Spread the word about meal sites in your community or communities near you.

Schools interested in becoming a summer meal champion are invited to participate in an [informational webinar](#) on Feb. 19, from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

For more information, visit the Iowa Department of Education [Summer Food Service Program webpage](#), or contact Stephanie Dross at 515-281-4760 or stephanie.dross@iowa.gov.

[Top of page](#)



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